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# Advocate of Peace

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## THE NET VALUE OF THE POPE'S APPEAL

THE letter of Pope Benedict, under date of August 1, addressed "To the leaders of the belligerent peoples," is a worthy political aspiration cast in the form of an ecclesiastical rhapsody. The political formula presented consists of five proposals, namely: First, "the simultaneous and reciprocal diminution of armaments," that "the moral force of right" may be substituted for the "material force of arms"; second, the "institution of arbitration," with "penalties" for a nation that refuses "either to submit a national question to arbitration or to accept its decision"; third, "true liberty and community of the seas"; fourth, "complete and reciprocal condonation"; fifth, "reciprocal restitution of the territory at present occupied." The Pope's assumption that he is still "common father of the faithful" sounds strange to non-Catholic Christian and especially to non-Christian ears. It is this which lends an ecclesiastical bias to the utterance. It is this ecclesiastical squint that enables His Holiness to preserve his "perfect impartiality toward all belligerents," to find solace in such a phrase as "to do all the good possible," to expect the nations now at each others' throats, and as now constituted, to "obtain in the future generations a splendid name of pacificators," and to ignore the non-Christian peoples of the world.

There is little to criticise in the formula submitted; but we wish there had been more attention given to the principles of justice, to the faith of peoples, to the free consent of the governed, to the inviolability of contracts, to the rights and duties of States small and great, and to the intolerable wrongs which began and which have intensified the war which the Pope appropriately calls "a useless massacre." A grim fact constituting a just basis of criticism, we believe, is that no such attempt was made by any great religious body, outside the Quakers, three, five, twenty years ago, when there would have been some hope of the acceptance of such principles, and when the American Peace Society was almost frantically trying to convince an unwilling world of the great need. That was the time for Christian statesmanship. Even if the church had failed in its immediate aim, it would have been in position to speak with an authority now unfortunately denied to it.

But the Pope has rendered to the world an incalculable service. His letter has greatly, if indirectly,

served the purposes of the Russian democracy, nipped in the bud certain sickly plants nursed by malcontent obstructionists in this country, and opened the way for an ending of the war. This is true not because of things said in the letter, but because of the letter itself. The letter, cordially disapproved among the Entente Allies, has drawn from one of those allies a reply that casts into oblivion the all too familiar ambitions for punitive damages, for the partition of empires, for selfish, exclusive, and self-defeating *zollvereins*, a reply that puts clearly to the fore the equal rights of all peoples, self-government, and the privileges of unrestricted economic development for all. In short, the President of the United States has supplied the deficiencies of the Pope's letter, clarified conspicuously the rights and duties of States, encouraged immeasurably the new Russian democracy, and given clear definition to aims for which the young men of America will willingly go forth to serve, and if need be to die. No longer is there any necessity for a people's council for democracy and "terms of peace," for the terms of peace, clear to some of us from the start, are on the table. They were addressed to the Pope, but they cannot fail to reach the German people, and to hasten the extension of that German popular government with which we and our associates will gladly negotiate. The gateway to a world peace is unlocked. The German people can open it when they will.

We all owe a debt of deep gratitude to Pope Benedict XV for furnishing to President Wilson the opportunity of phrasing crystal clear the issues now before the peoples. This may have been the motive with which His Holiness went about the business. In any event, the result has been a net encouragement to war-ridden and war-weary Europe.

The psychological influence, too, has already been very real. Not since the sinking of the *Lusitania* has any single event been so talked of. Peace has been on the front page of the papers as never before since the war began. In consequence of the Pope's first proposal, the aims behind the calling of the First Hague Conference have been rehabilitated, for those aims related primarily to the limitation of armaments. The principle of arbitration so prominently to the fore in the agenda of both Hague Conferences has been brought again to the attention of the nations in his second proposal. The Declaration of London is suggested anew by the reference to the freedom of the seas. It is no small matter that one

so powerful among so many has, even if a bit tardily, seen something of the light by which the feet of men will yet be led in the ways of international sense and had the great courage to speak boldly of it.

## THE NEXT STEP TOWARD PEACE

THE point that we have reached, now that President Wilson's reply to the Pope has been presented to the world, accepted virtually unanimously by the majority of nations that constitute the Entente, and, it is to be hoped, adequately reviewed by the peoples of the Central Powers, is summed up in two sentences from that note: "We cannot take the word of the present rulers of Germany . . . unless explicitly supported by such conclusive evidence of the will and purpose of the German people themselves as the other peoples of the world would be justified in accepting. . . . We must await some new evidence of the purposes of the great peoples of the Central Powers."

We are told that this does not necessarily imply the overthrow of the Hohenzollerns and revolution in Germany. We are further warned that Germany—meaning presumably the German government—will attempt to stage a moving but unsubstantial drama of internal politics that will give the appearance of the expression of the will of the people, while in reality merely subserving the concealed purposes of autocracy. The "new evidence," then, is not supposed necessarily to be the establishment of a German Republic, and yet we are warned against accepting evidence of anything short of this to be given in the near future. Verily, there is left but a narrow pathway by which the German people may find their way towards peace? Whether they can find and follow this path remains to be seen, and how it will be done, if done, it is useless to attempt to predict. There is, however, one fact that is worthy of consideration by this country and all the Allies at this juncture—that is, that until the German people lose complete faith in their own government, they will never abandon that government for the tender mercies of their friends the enemy.

Two ways now present themselves by which to cause the German people to lose faith in the present government, and so bring them to modify it to the point essential for the future well-being of organized society. We are today, in a sense, at the divergence of these ways. Soon, if not immediately, we must decide which is to be taken. One of these ways is the old, obvious one of crushing victory. The other is the more enlightened way of the spirit of international good faith and cooperation. By crushing victory, if such be possible, we may "teach" the German people that their faith in militarism, junkerdom, and a treacherous and faithless au-

tocracy is mistaken. But such teaching, besides being costly to the teacher, is doubtful in its eventual success. "Be righteous, or die!" will win many temporary converts, but it is not recognized by enlightened people as permanently effectual.

Yet this path to peace is inevitable, unless we choose to take a better way. There is no foundation for any belief that the Allies will stop short of conclusive and crushing victory unless some quicker course is taken which renders that victory unnecessary. And President Wilson has pointed out beyond dispute that this must be directed towards the German people themselves.

It is, then, our task to hasten peace by the adoption of such a course, by the interposition at this point of the active spirit of international good faith and cooperation, by not crushing, but convincing, the German people. We have to deal, it must be remembered, with a people who have been *educated* to believe that their masters are all-powerful, and that the enemy are a set of thieves, liars, and hypocrites. We cannot win the faith and cooperation of such a people by any easy means. The proof of our good will must be indisputable. Our guarantees must be unquestionable. Our purposes must be crystal clear. We need give no more than we ask; but we cannot avoid any opportunity to make the fairness of that bargain apparent to the most prejudiced German of those who truly desire world peace and international justice.

Were we to present to the German people proposals for future peace which, while certainly stating our own rights in a society of nations, yet stated as clearly German, Austrian, Bulgarian, and Turkish rights, and our intention to protect these, we would go in that moment farther towards undermining German autocracy and militarism than we would at the end of years of conflict by the crushing of German armies. Norman Angell has recently come forward with tentative proposals of this sort. Concerning these, there may be a difference of opinion as to their adequacy, but at least they furnish an illustration of the sort of proposals that are meant. These are:

1. The new society of nations which the Allies constitute will stand for the valid rights of a peaceful, law-abiding Germany as much as of those of a Belgium or a Serbia, and will pledge themselves to protect not only the small state from aggression, but the great as well.

2. The Allies will not attempt to remedy one wrong by creating another, in Austria or elsewhere. They are prepared to accept such modifications of the old conceptions of sovereignty and independence as may be necessary in order to make a real society of nations workable, and the freedom of one state compatible with the welfare of another.

3. A Germany or an Austria that is prepared to accept the obligations—freedom for subject peoples, limitations of armaments, or what not—which attach to membership in the new international society, will also